

The Times-Dispatch

Business Office.....Times-Dispatch Building
10 South Tenth Street
Richmond, Va.
Washington Bureau.....1029 Hull Street
Petersburg Bureau.....109 N. Sycamore Street
Lynchburg Bureau.....218 Eighth Street

BY MAIL. One, Six Three One
POSTAGE PAID. Year, Mo. Mo. Mo.
Daily with Sunday.....\$6.00 \$3.00 \$1.50
Daily without Sunday.....4.00 2.00 1.00
Sunday edition only.....2.00 1.00 .50

By Times-Dispatch Carrier Delivery Service in Richmond (and suburbs) and Petersburg—
One Week.....15 cents
Daily without Sunday.....10 cents
Sunday edition only.....5 cents

Entered January 27, 1905, at Richmond, Va., as second-class matter under act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1914.

THE ANNEXATION BILL.

Sound policy directs the enactment of legislation that will give no part of the State an advantage over the others. Scrupulously, the Assembly must refrain from any course that will cripple one county for the profit of any city; zealously, the Assembly must avoid throttling a city for the sake of a county. Each must be allowed to work out its own destiny unhampered and unhindered.

This fundamental principle should be invoked to defeat that remarkable bill by which it is proposed to prevent the future development of Richmond. In presenting this antiannexation bill, Senator Wendenburg and Mr. Gunn are but voicing the sentiments of an element of their constituents, a probable majority of the voters of Henrico County, and are not, of course, to be condemned. But their bill, as we see it, will operate to prevent the development of Richmond and of every other growing city at a time when they most need to extend their borders.

Theoretically, the annexation with five years of 25 per cent of an adjacent county by a city would seem sufficient. But a moment's thought will show that there are very few small counties of which not more than 25 per cent of the assessed value lie within the territory which a near-by city may need in five years' time. The reason for this is simple. The day of slow advance in Virginia has passed. With our industries made stable and our progress assured, we are now in the midst of development by which our cities may almost double in a decade. Richmond, for instance, increased her population from 55,000 in 1900, to 127,628 in 1910; Norfolk from 16,424 to 67,452; Roanoke from 21,495 to 54,874. Some of this growth was due to annexation, some was the reason for annexation; little of it would have been possible had not the laws permitted cities, under proper restrictions, to extend their borders. A limitation of annexation within five years to 25 per cent of the assessed value of the county adjoining a city would certainly retard development, and might even cause such congestion within the city as would bring about a reaction.

There is another and even more compelling reason why this bill should not be passed. Who creates the value of the property sought to be annexed, the city or the county? There can be no debate as to the answer. Every one knows that the increase of values near cities is due to the advance of the urban population. As a city becomes crowded, those who wish more fresh air move beyond the corporate limits and build homes. But they are city people, earning their living in the municipality, and investing in the county because it is near the city. Thus it may reasonably be stated that the property which is annexed is either especially valuable because city people have improved it, or else because of the proximity of the city and the prospect of annexation. The city merely proposes to incorporate and to improve the values its growth has increased. The county, in turn, is stripped of nothing it has made, and of little it has improved, beyond the amount of taxes paid by the property owners who favor annexation.

Were the Wendenburg bill to be passed at this time, when Richmond is growing as never in our history, it would mean a serious check to the city's future. Norfolk, Roanoke, Portsmouth and Lynchburg would, to a less degree, be affected in the order named. Those citizens who plan to build in the suburbs and to pay their taxes to the county before they are annexed would be discouraged in their efforts; rural values would decline, rather than advance; the county would lose by its own short vision.

The present law regarding annexation is certainly sufficient to protect the legitimate interests of every county. A nonpartition judge, not a resident of the district, hears the evidence, fixes the proper bounds, and is specifically authorized to exclude from annexation all territory not needed by the city in the reasonably near future. Can a fair-minded man ask more than this? Should legislation, prescribing more?

Who doesn't like it? As we understand it, the Toney resolution for an investigation of the Soldiers' Home had its origin in complaints against the rationing served the veterans. No charge of peculation, inefficiency, mismanagement or dishonesty has been made, the whole trouble is with the food.

If this be the reason for this attempt, we wonder how many public institutions, schools, hospitals, colleges, boarding-houses, old ladies' homes, hotels, orphan asylums and cafes can escape investigation. Was there ever a steward who could eat to every taste? Was there ever a woman with which some did not find fault? And is not this particularly the case where people are getting something for nothing?

AT THE SHELTERING ARMS.

At noon to-day there will gather in the reception-rooms of the Sheltering Arms Hospital a company of men and women to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of that noblest of charities. Led by Dr. S. C. Mitchell, they will give thanks for the privileges of ministering through these years to the thousands who have come to their door seeking treatment.

The history of this institution is a beautiful narrative of patient love. Twenty-five years ago Miss Rebecca Peterkin and some of her friends found that, despite our hospitals and our surgeons skilled in their craft, there was no refuge except the City Home where a man could find free treatment, regardless of his religious faith, his nationality, his estate or his age. Determining to do something to these, the good women opened the Sheltering Arms Hospital. It was an humble beginning, without endowment, without assured income, without every needed thing save faith and love. Six patients could then be cared for at a time by the single nurse, whose salary these good women paid.

How the work has grown and what blessings have followed it! The hospital, which makes no charge of any sort, is equipped with forty-three beds, of which an average of thirty-eight are always occupied; fifteen nurses are daily in attendance; 653 patients were cared for during the past year, of which number 163 were strangers within our gates; 13,223 days of free treatment were given during the twelve months.

More imposing still are the figures for the twenty-five years which closed last night. Struggling for funds and scarcely knowing how the expenses of the morrow were to be met, the directors of the hospital have given treatment absolutely free to 7,500 patients at a cost of approximately \$150,000. Seven thousand five hundred—the destitute of the city, the friendless, the despairing, men without hope for the future and women doomed to die, babies and little children, tottering old mothers and feeble fathers, not one has been denied the best that love could give!

We urge our readers to visit the hospital to-day and to rejoice with those who have so nobly borne so heavy a burden. Do more. Of your means to-day send a contribution to eke out the \$2,500 given annually by the city and the \$1,000 contributed by the King's Daughters. No nobler charity can ever appeal for your assistance; no money you can invest will yield a larger dividend of blessing.

MAKE SCHOOL APPROPRIATIONS EQUITABLE.

Attempts to array the common schools against the institutions of higher learning should fail. The two are interrelated and interdependent. Education is neither from the top down nor from the bottom up. A sound college education is a necessity if we are to have the best teachers and supervisors for our common schools. A sound common school education is needed for the proper preparation of the student for college.

Members of the Senate of Virginia are urged to remember these facts, and to remember also that any system of education which does not take them into account is not balanced. To maintain an equitable system the appropriations for the two interrelated and interdependent branches should be equitable. The Senate Finance Committee, we believe, has attempted to make these appropriations proportionate, though unable to give as much as required. But we fear the Finance Committee has not succeeded. We do not believe that an increase of \$50,000 for primary schools and an increase of nearly \$300,000 for institutions of higher learning is an equitable division of the funds at the disposal of the committee. We believe that the additional \$150,000 proposed by Senator Mapp's amendment, or as much thereof as possible, should be provided by the Senate.

Senator Wendenburg sought yesterday to show that the common school appropriation was increased 30 per cent, or by a larger percentage than the appropriation of other educational institutions, but Senator Wendenburg did not make out his case. It is true that the estimated increase in taxes will raise the amount received from the general fund by \$37,000, making an increase of \$137,000 for common schools, but in figuring his percentage, he took the wrong basis. He figured on the basis of the \$550,000 appropriated and not on the basis of \$1,308,740, plus \$590,000, or \$1,898,740, the total received by direct appropriations and the general fund combined. He used the combined total of increase, but did not use the combined total of amount received. Naturally the result of such figuring was wrong. An increase of \$137,000 over nearly \$2,000,000 is an increase of about 8 and not of 30 per cent.

The increase for other institutions of learning was greater. It would be unfair to ask the higher institutions of learning to be maintained on a smaller appropriation than received for the last two years. The appropriations for these expenses should be increased. It is not unfair to ask that the construction of new buildings for some of these schools, at which no emergency exists, should be held in abeyance until the common schools have been more nearly provided for on an adequate scale. To give a greater than a just proportion of the funds available to institutions of higher learning and to give a smaller proportion to the common schools is to array the Virginia public against the colleges and normal schools. To give the proper proportion to both is to maintain an equitable system. This the Finance Committee has not done. This the Mapp amendment does.

Almost time for the Mexican Marathon. Our money is on Huerta.

THE OBJECT OF THE LITERACY TEST.

The immigration bill passed by the House of Representatives seems to have found few friends. Its many good and important features apparently have been lost sight of in the concentrated attack made upon the provision for applying the literacy test to those seeking admission to this country. This provision has had, few outside the halls of Congress to speak for it, and after noting the apparent unanimity of the opposition to it one may be pardoned for wondering how it happened that a majority of the members of Congress could have favored a plan which no one else appears to regard as possessing any merit whatever.

To our mind, the answer lies in the fact that the critics of the bill have been led astray by missing the right point of view. It seems absurd to attempt to separate the criminal from the potentially good immigrants by a literacy test, but is this the purpose of the test? Is not that end sought by other provisions of the bill, and is not the literacy test designed to separate groups rather than the individuals? Certain classes of Europe make better American citizens than others. Certain peoples of other continents are of our race, and others are of races that do not assimilate well with ours. It so happens that the most desirable nationalities of Europe and the migrating races more nearly resembling ours are in general the most illiterate. The literacy clause, then, is intended to bar, not the least desirable individuals, but the least desirable nationalities and races.

Congress considered the question from the standpoint of large bodies of men; the critics of the literacy provision consider it from the standpoint of individual men. As Congress has attempted in other ways to solve the problem of individual fitness, it acted more wisely than most people have been disposed to admit in adding the literacy provision. It may be that the literacy test is not easy of application, and it may be that it can be easily evaded, but from the viewpoint of Congress it is far from being indefensible. If it is practicable, it is, to our mind, unassailable.

THE SPOTSYLVANIA NATIONAL PARK.

Our friend, the Fredericksburg Journal, accents our proffer of assistance in having the historic battlefields of Spotsylvania consecrated as a permanent national park. We stand ready to make good our pledge in any way we can, and we are sure that thousands of Virginians will gladly unite with the people of Fredericksburg in the same splendid undertaking.

What is the exact status of the proposal? Has the bill been introduced in Congress, and if so, by whom is it being urged? If our contemporary will give us the facts, we shall try to bestir our friends in support of the measure.

ANY TIME LEFT?

They are proposing to-day to teach bookkeeping in the common schools. Yesterday the plan was to add sex hygiene to the curriculum. A few weeks ago they were suggesting the advisability of instructing the children in nature-study, manual arts, agriculture and mechanics. Let the good work go on! Include in the brief session of our schools a course in public speaking, in bookmaking and in eugenics. Then, in the few moments left each day, let us teach a little reading, writing and arithmetic.

The Rappahannock Rhapsodist

Ballade of the Hacks of Country Towns. Drawn up in miscellaneous row, Outside the circles of long ago, Prayed, moaned and bled out of date, I wonder what has been their fate? I think their history abounds In ancient lore and high estate, The quaint old hacks of country towns.

In them some ante-bellum beau Rode to his tryst with heart elate, And some fair dame with cheek arow Went to meet Romance at the gate. I pity them their fall so great, Now doomed to old and prosy rounds: A motley, molly, desolate, The quaint old hacks of country towns.

Behind their spavined steeds they go, At clattering, weak and pained gait, The auto hoots its scorn to show, And scurries by at furious rate, And when some galled and broken "skate" Perks up and gives some futile bound, These quaint old hacks of country towns.

Alas, I feel compassionate For their pathetic looks and sounds! Their fate is so articulate, These quaint old hacks of country towns.

THOMAS LOMAX HUNTER.

Views of the Virginia Editors

A Hope Widely Shared. Every believer in real reform in Virginia may well share the hope of the Lynchburg News, that Governor Stuart "may find that it comport[s] with his general line of progressive policy" to urge favorable action upon the bill providing for the Torrens system of land registration. Not a single argument that will stand even superficial analysis can be brought against the system, while the arguments demanding its adoption are as cogent as they are numerous.—Norfolk Virginian-Pilot.

Agricultural Instructor for King William. We are pleased to learn that a movement is on foot to secure, with the assistance of the national government, the location at West Point of an agricultural expert, whose services will be at the disposal of the farmers of King William County. It is understood that this man will also teach agricultural chemistry and the science of farming in the schools of the county.

We are to be congratulated upon having county supervisors and a school board so alive to the people's interests that they are willing to undertake the expense of such an enterprising innovation.—The West Point News.

WHAT WAS NEWS FIFTY YEARS AGO

Reprinted from This Newspaper.

Re-enlistment Goes on Well. From headquarters at Orange Court-house, General Lee officially reports to the War Department as follows: "Since the late armistice having the following troops have re-enlisted for the war: The remaining regiments of Wilcox's Brigade, the Ninth and Tenth Alabama Regiments, Mahone's entire brigade, Gordon's Georgia Brigade, the Twenty-second Georgia Regiment, the First Regiment of Virginia Artillery, and Lomax's Virginia Cavalry Brigade. Re-enlistments are progressing in other brigades and divisions."

Dead Against Extortioners. In response to a resolution of the Confederate Congress inquiring why General Imboden and Sam Jones had forbidden the shipment of supplies and provisions from Southwest Virginia and East Tennessee to Richmond, these commanders have submitted reports to the War Department, which have been submitted to the additional committee. When he found that speculators and extortioners were buying up all of the supplies in the country, General Imboden ordered his order to be issued, that country bare of necessary supplies for the people and the army. General Jones' reply was that he had his order to the superintendent of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, in which he said there was no objection to legitimate business, but care must be taken to the end that speculators and extortioners should not rid the country of the supplies most needed there for the maintenance of the people and the army.

The Case of Mrs. Allan. The case of Mrs. Caroline Allan, the wife of Patterson Allan, of Goodland County, charged with treasonable correspondence with the enemy, after being postponed for some time, since December last, was called in the United States District Court, presided over by Judge Watson yesterday, and with a dozen witnesses were examined. Owing to the absence of several witnesses for the prosecution and the defense, the case was again postponed to Monday.

President Davis's Address. The address of President Davis to the soldiers of the Confederate army, delivered yesterday, is one of the most inspiring and beautiful productions of a pen which has no equal in this country. But his lofty spirit, and the heroic heart shining through every word, throw into the shade the faultless elegance of style, and warm the coldest heart into a blaze of admiration for the cause and the man. The Confederacy may well be proud of its chief. The army never yet has felt so much enthusiasm and devotion from one who has sympathized with it from the beginning, whom its heroes recognize as the "brave" and "brave" stand by to the end as the representative man of the fight and South.

Thanks to the Blues. In the Confederate Senate yesterday a resolution of thanks to the Virginia troops who have re-enlisted for the war was passed. The resolution was offered by Senator Caperton of Virginia.

Prisoners Recaptured. Twenty-two of the 109 Yankee prisoners who escaped from Libby's Island Tuesday night were recaptured yesterday and returned to their old quarters. The prisoners were captured in a house in Hanover County while trying to make their way North. Among the captured men were two colonels, six majors, four captains and seven lieutenants.

Sent to Jail. In the Henric County Court yesterday Travis Flannery was made on default a fine of \$500, and sentenced to jail for two months. The delegation was here from Warrenton, having formerly lived in that town, and his home in this city having been converted for two years past into a kind of hospital for sick and wounded soldiers from that town and the county of Warren.

From Charleston. A dispatch from Charleston says the enemy, who advanced on Libby's Island Tuesday, were driven back in a hurry, and our pickets have resumed their former positions.

Dr. Duncan to Lecture. The Rev. James A. Duncan, D. D., will lecture to-night in the First Baptist Church on the "Inspiration of the Bible." Such a subject and such a speaker will certainly draw a large audience.

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Married. At St. James Church on Thursday evening last George J. Thomas, Jr., of Alexandria, and Miss Mary E. Carrington, daughter of the late Dr. Richard B. Carrington of this city, were united in marriage. The Rev. Dr. Perkins was the officiating clergyman.

Voice of the People

The Single Tax Panacea. To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir,—The Hon. R. L. Toney, chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, has a bill to reduce the State tax rate from 35 cents to 25 cents on the \$100.

That is good, and the idea is in line with real tax reform that is, to have high tax assessments and a corresponding rate on the value of the property. If this is accomplished by the present Legislature, and also a new State officer created, the tax commissioner, that is about all that can be expected of the present Legislature, though the new law which reduces the rate is a compromise between what ought to be and what is.

Use the "taxing power of the community" as to stimulate business instead of penalizing it. Don't tax capital; we want to attract money to it! Don't tax business and occupations, as it interferes with the distribution of wealth, and makes trouble all around. Tax the ground (land values), as it can't run away or be hidden from the tax collector. Taxing idle land and vacant lots means that they will be forced into use, with a great increase in production, and in building of homes for the poor. It means natural and healthy growth all along the line—business for merchants and railroads, and labor for labor and the consumer.

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By John T. McCutcheon.

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